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State Institution - Owahtonago

# State Public School

## Owatonna

The State Public School was created by the Legislature in 1885 and was opened at Owatonna in 1886. Provisions of law provided that dependent, neglected and ill-treated children under fifteen years of age, who were of normal mentality and free from disease, were eligible to admission on order of the Probate and Juvenile Courts of the State. In the legislative session of 1945 a bill was passed which provided for a change in the services of the State Public School on a two-year trial basis. The provisions of this law designated that high-grade feeble-minded children, who had been so committed by the Probate Courts of the State, were to be admitted for the purpose of providing academic education and vocational training. It was the intention of the Legislature that this training should point toward the eventual release of as many of these children as possible so that these individuals could be given a trial in making a successful economic and social adjustment in community living. The dependent and neglected children in residence were transferred to the care and supervision of the Division of Social Welfare. All of the physical facilities at the State Public School thereby became available for use in providing training and care for the new population.

The main building consists of a central section with north and south wings and enlarged dining rooms. There are fourteen cottages, a hospital, service building, gymnasium, superintendent's residence, laundry, power house, cottages for employees, greenhouse and sundry farm buildings.

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| Mendus R. Vevle .....      | Superintendent                    |
| George H. Doleman .....    | Case Work Supervisor              |
| Harold W. Isackson .....   | Steward                           |
| Margothy M. Eidem .....    | Principal of School               |
| Dr. Grace Arthur .....     | Part-time Consulting Psychologist |
| Elvia Rosenfeldt .....     | Part-time Psychologist            |
| W. T. McEnaney, M. D. .... | Part-time Physician               |
| W. Lundquist, M. D. ....   | Part-time Ophthalmologist         |
| E. Jensen, D. D. S. ....   | Part-time Dentist                 |

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| Capacity of Institution .....            | 410            |
| Number of Patients June 30th, 1946 ..... | 350            |
| Area of Grounds, acres .....             | 380            |
| acreage under cultivation .....          | 270            |
| Value of lands and buildings .....       | \$1,019,000.00 |
| Value of personal property .....         | 235,400.00     |

## Expenditures:

|  | 1944-45      |            | 1945-46      |            |
|--|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
|  | Amount       | Per Capita | Amount       | Per Capita |
| Current expense -----                                | \$ 87,748.88 | \$870.78   | \$ 87,814.49 | \$295.00   |
| Salaries -----                                       | 114,859.55   | 1,187.22   | 188,208.54   | 616.86     |
| General repairs -----                                | 2,672.73     | 26.46      |              |            |
| Total operating expense ----                         | \$185,281.16 | \$1,834.46 | \$270,823.03 | \$911.86   |
| Permanent improvements -----                         | 34,055.86    | 337.19     | 22,809.56    | 76.80      |
| Total expenditures -----                             | \$219,337.02 | \$2,171.65 | \$293,632.59 | \$988.66   |
| Average population -----                             | 101          |            | 297          |            |
| Number of officers and employees June 30, 1946 ----- |              |            | 120          |            |

*To the Director, Division of Public Institutions:*

I respectfully submit the following report for the year beginning July 1st, 1945 and ending July 1st, 1946, this being the year of operation of the State Public School under the Division of Public Institutions with the new program determined by the 1945 Session of the Legislature.

## POPULATION

During the fiscal year, ending June 30th, 1946, there were 364 first admissions, of which number 233 were transfers from the School for Feeble minded at Faribault. There were 131 admissions received directly from Counties. On June 30th, 1946 there were enrolled 350, 90 of whom were temporarily absent. The daily average population was 297. Of the 364 first admissions, up to June 30th, 1946, 3 were returned to Counties and 1 transferred to other institutions.

## MEDICAL SERVICE

During this period it has been difficult to secure all of the services that would be considered as minimum requirements. Dr. C. T. McEnaney, since his return from military service, has continued at the State Public School on a part-time basis. To him are assigned the responsibilities of the physical examinations, diagnosis and care of those who are ill and the performing of all operations. When the feeble minded children were received here, it was necessary to develop a new approach. We found that they did not respond in the same way as the normal children did and in many cases required services that would not be asked for by a normal group.

In November 1945 we had an outbreak of diphtheria. The entire institution was placed under quarantine and procedures were developed for the handling of all clinical cases and diphtheria carriers. Services of the State Board of Health were solicited and their cooperation received in the working out of our plans to control this epidemic. We were under quarantine for a period of approximately four months. During that time many of our children became ill with diphtheria and many others had to be isolated because of being carriers. We were fortunate in that we went through this year

severe condition without a death. In spite of the fact that at no time was it possible to secure adequate staff and additional nurses could be found. This quarantine period interfered with the carrying out of every routine and plan set up for the institution. As would be expected the work of the school department was seriously curtailed. After this epidemic had run its course we were given permission to immunize all of our children against diphtheria. This now has become a routine procedure so that future epidemics, if one should occur, would be much less severe and much more easily controlled. The diphtheria epidemic was followed by one of measles. By comparison this was very mild, though it did continue to interfere with the normal routine of the children and the carrying out of plans for the institution.

The general health of the children, outside of these epidemics, has been considered to be good. Our greatest difficulty has been the number of outpatients that have to be treated for minor ailments. Apparently the experience of going to the hospital to be checked by the nurse and to be given some minor treatments has developed to be an enjoyable experience.

During this period we secured the services of Dr. N. E. Jensen, Dentist, on a part-time basis. He has done an effective and thorough piece of work. A complete dental survey was completed and corrective work was done as rapidly as the patient could be reached. At this time the general condition of the teeth of all of the children could be considered as excellent. Dr. Jensen gives us three and one-half days a week of service. We experienced much difficulty in securing ophthalmological services. Men trained in this field were just not available. We finally, however, interested Dr. C. W. Lundquist of Owatonna, who promised to give us one full day a month. During the time that he has worked at the State Public School he has checked the eyes of all of the children who have in any way shown any visual defects or difficulties. He has demonstrated a keen insight into the problems the children present. Very careful examinations are done and whenever the conditions warrant, glasses are prescribed. Rechecks are made as often as necessary and changes in prescriptions are recommended whenever the examinations indicate it. This service has demonstrated definite educational values. It is no longer necessary for the teacher to doubt that any of her pupils are handicapped in the learning process because of improperly fitted glasses and because no glasses have been furnished.

#### EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

In organizing the school for the high-grade feeble-minded children it was necessary to consider many changes and revisions of our plans. In the first place we advised all of the teachers who had worked with all of the normal dependent children that if any of them felt that they did not wish to continue because of the change in our population, we would be willing

to accept their resignations. The loyalty of our staff in this respect must be recognized. Every member of our former staff decided in favor of continuing after the changes in the school had been made. The problem of securing additional staff was a very difficult one and because of the shortage of teachers and salary limitations, it was next to impossible to secure the teachers with the type of training that we required and with the interest to work with feeble-minded children. The new teachers secured have demonstrated both the capacity and interest and have contributed to the general success of our program. At no time, however, have we had a full staff and substitute teachers had to be employed whenever one could be secured. Our greatest handicap, however, has been the lack of space and the shortage of teachers in the vocational field. The normal dependent children required a program that was almost entirely academic. As a result we had a very limited amount of space for vocational subjects. Every effort was expended in developing the available facilities so that as much work in this field as possible could be carried out. In spite of these adjustments this program could be developed to only about one-half of the number of classes that should be taught in the vocational field. During this period we have not been able to secure the services of physical education teachers so that this important function could not be carried out.

To aid us in our program we secured the part-time services of Miss Sylvia Rosenfeldt, psychologist, who was furnished through the Bureau of Psychological Services of the Division of Public Institutions. She has been able to give us somewhat less than half time. We also secured the services of Dr. Grace Arthur, nationally known clinical psychologist of Saint Paul, who has been able to give us approximately four days a month. Our testing and re-testing program was assigned to Miss Rosenfeldt. We are somewhat behind in the carrying out of this important service. Dr. Arthur has given us invaluable service in analyzing our school program, assisting the teachers in their adjustment to this new service and in their development of an effective approach to the teaching problem. She has also assisted us in setting up a program of achievement testing, analysis of the child's capacity to learn and the assignment of the child to the school room in which he would be able to do his best work. A report of the effectiveness of this approach to the educational problem of these children would require more space than is available. It will have to suffice to say that in general the children have shown steady and consistent progress and that in a large number of cases a new interest and desire to learn has become evident.

#### RELIGIOUS SERVICES

When the high-grade feeble-minded children were received a careful study of their religious needs was made. Both Protestant and Catholic Pas-

tors were called in for consultation and a program of service developed. On each Saturday morning at 9 o'clock Father Neudecker of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church conducts a Mass for all of the Catholic children. He also assists in the religious training of these children and prepares them for confirmation and first communion. In May of 1946 Bishop Leo Binz of Winona came to the State Public School to conduct confirmation rites and administer first communion. Fifty-five children were included in this service.

On Sunday mornings at 9 o'clock a Protestant Chapel service is held and conducted by several Pastors selected from the local churches. In conference with two of the Lutheran Pastors one was selected—Rev. H. Bohnhoff of St. John's Lutheran Church—to conduct a Lutheran service each Monday Evening at 7 o'clock. From this Lutheran group we selected a group of older children who had not been confirmed. These were instructed and in June 1946, 32 children confirmed and received their first communion.

The Pastors of the Methodist, Associated (Presbyterian and Congregational) and Baptist churches were contacted and each has given invaluable service in taking children of their respective faiths and giving them special instruction. In October 1946 Rev. E. C. Reineke of the Methodist Church had a special service of baptism for a group of these children who had not been baptised—25 in number—and this group together with 8 others who had been previously baptised—total 33—were taken into the membership of the Methodist Church.

The cooperation of the local Pastors in providing special religious instruction for children of all faiths must be recognized. Their services have been a great asset to us, as it has been possible to give religious knowledge and also to develop a spiritual appreciation on the part of all of the children.

#### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

To evaluate the services of the State Public School from July 1st, 1945 to July 1st, 1946 is not an easy task. The children have shown consistent progress and development. This is especially true of those who have intelligent rating above 50. Some progress has been made by those of our children who have an intelligence rating in the 40s. There has been a gradual but steady improvement in attitude, in the desire to learn and a willingness to cooperate and to follow directions of their supervisors. Several of the older children show evidence of considerable capacity and plans for their return to society were considered. For many of them a prediction of a successful adjustment can be made. Another group, though younger, is showing evidence of the fact that an ultimate return and successful adjustment can be considered. Still another group are, as it were, on the borderline and will require a considerable amount of work and study before a decision regarding

a plan can be made. If an attempt were made to enumerate the services that have produced good results, it would be necessary to catalog a long list of experiences and activities.

At this time I wish to pay special tribute to the housemothers and housefathers in charge of cottages, who have remained with us and who have done a fine job in training the children that come under their supervision. I would also include our dietetical service and especially Miss Anne S. McGregor, dietician, for a fine job of training in proper table manners and in the carrying out of social duties and obligations in the dining room. I would also mention the work that has been done by the group of men in directing a worthwhile and effective Boy Scout activity. This has been done at a great personal sacrifice. The health department, the school department, previously mentioned, services on the play grounds, have all contributed to the general advancement of our program. Those of our employees who have been directly responsible for the organization of a program of work activities and the supervision of the children assigned deserve much credit. In general it should be stated that every employee in a position of responsibility has been most cooperative and has placed the interest of the child uppermost in his planning.

#### CONCLUSION

I would be remiss in fulfilling my duties if I did not at this time express a word of sincere appreciation for the faithful and intelligent services rendered by those employed at the State Public School. I am deeply indebted to each one of them. Likewise, I wish to sincerely thank Mr. Carl H. Swanson, Director of the Division of Public Institutions, and his staff for the high-type of cooperation given to us during the period covered by this report.

Respectfully submitted,

M. R. VEVLE

Superintendent

# Colony for Epileptics

Cambridge

In 1919 the State Legislature authorized the selection of a site from state owned land for a colony for epileptics. An amendment to the original law was passed, permitting the purchase of land for this site. The selection was Cambridge, Minnesota and the institution was opened in 1925.

The institution has expanded from the original building to its present size which comprises the main administration building, housing and administrative offices, hospital department, two wards for children, kitchen, bakery, laundry and school department; an auditorium; warehouse; power plant; ten cottages for patients and farm buildings.

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| R. J. Gully, M. D. ....      | Acting Superintendent       |
| H. R. Sherman, M. D. ....    | Physician                   |
| G. H. Mesker, M. D. ....     | Physician                   |
| G. D. Eitel, M. D. ....      | Consulting Surgeon          |
| F. F. Wipperman, M. D. ....  | Consulting Oculist & Aurist |
| Wm. P. Curran, D. D. S. .... | Dentist                     |
| R. F. Gregory .....          | Steward                     |
| Miss Helen Weld .....        | Principal                   |

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| Capacity of institution .....          | 1,108          |
| Number of patients June 30, 1946 ..... | 1,093          |
| Area of grounds, acres .....           | 359            |
| Acreage under cultivation .....        | 182            |
| Value of lands and buildings .....     | \$1,640,598.00 |
| Value of personal property .....       | 241,798.00     |

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## Expenditures:

|  | 1944-45      |            | 1945-46      |            |
|--|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
|  | Amount       | Per Capita | Amount       | Per Capita |
| Current expense .....                  | \$128,628.96 | \$119.58   | \$131,285.47 | \$128.86   |
| Salaries .....                         | 146,947.37   | 138.76     | 190,175.71   | 179.41     |
| General repairs .....                  | 3,894.93     | 3.49       | 4,428.17     | 4.18       |
| Special repairs and replacements ..... | 1,874.24     | 1.77       | 2,492.83     | 2.35       |
| Total operating expense .....          | \$279,145.50 | \$263.60   | \$328,382.18 | \$309.80   |
| Permanent improvements .....           | 1,318.83     | 1.24       | 2,678.05     | 2.52       |
| Total expenditures .....               | \$280,462.33 | \$264.84   | \$331,055.23 | \$312.82   |
| Average population .....               | 1059         |            | 1060         |            |

Number of officers and employees June 30, 1946 ..... 130